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Congo News Letter

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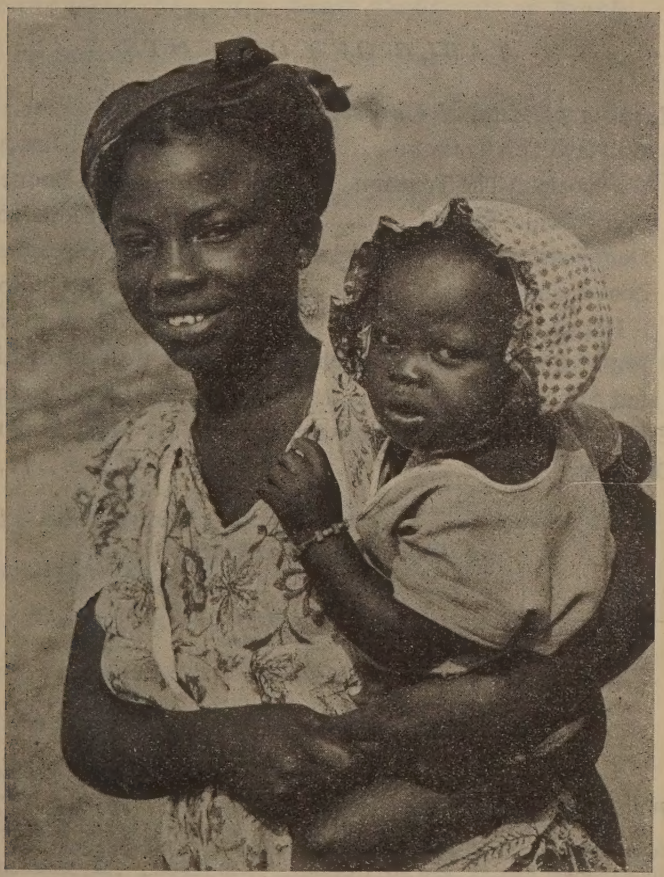

Christmas Greetings

OCTOBER 1954

CONGO NEWS LETTER

Vol. XLVI October 1954 No. 4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Resume of Annual Conference:		*Page*
We Have This Treasure	C. J. Jump	4
We Proclaim The Treasure	C. E. Boone	7
The Treasure Shared	M. Eldredge	12
Demonstrating the Treasure	C. Sprague	15
Loaves and Fishes	M. Jump	20
It Happened — I was There	C. G. Weaver	22
Impressions of 1954 Conference	Colon Kapini	26
I Had Almost Forgotten	Mabel Albaugh	27
Esther Ehnbom — In Memorium	Mary Bonar	31
Directory		32

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A Christmas Carol

Awake were they only, those shepherds so lonely,
On guard in that silence profound:
When colour had faded, when night-time
had shaded
Their senses from sight and from sound,
Lo, then broke a wonder, then drifted asunder
The veils from the splendour of God,
When light from the Holy came down to the lonely,
And heaven to the earth that they trod.

May light now enfold us, O Lord, for behold us
Like shepherds, from tumult withdrawn,
Nor hearing, nor seeing, all other care fleeing,
We wait the ineffable dawn.
O Spirit all-knowing, thou source overflowing,
O move in the darkness around,
That sight may be in us, true hearing to win us
Glad tidings where Christ may be found.

— WELCH CAROL

WE HAVE THIS TREASURE

CHESTER J. JUMP

Opening devotional talk by the Chairman of the Conference. Text: 2 Corinthians 4:7.

PAUL wrote to the church at Corinth of the treasure we hav in earthen vessels. When we think of this verse, our mind generally turn to the earthen vessels, but as I reread this verse th other day, I began to think about those first few words, "But w have this treasure," and I began to wonder what Paul would hav said comprises this treasure.

GOD WAS IN CHRIST

I imagine that first of all Paul would have said that the sum and substance of this treasure of the Christian gospel we possess is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself . . . that there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." That's the essential message of Christianity. We stand amazed that God, Himself, has come to earth, that He has taken the initiative to seek us out and rescue us from the sinful condition into which we have fallen. How joyfully and meaningfully those words must have fallen upon the ears of those to whom Paul preached as he travelled around Asia Minor and ventured even into Europe. How those to whom he wrote must have read and reread and treasured those words—God was in Christ; there is therefore now no condemnation. . . . . .

This message that God was in Christ, is no less a treasure for us of the twentieth century than it was for those of the first. . . . . We all have sinned and fallen short. And we're powerless to change ourselves. Without Christ we are lost. We're like sheep without a shepherd, strayed from the fold. We've lost our way blind without a leader. And then we read the good news of the Christian gospel, "God was in Christ". . . . . .

Never let us become so much professional Christians, so familiar with the gospel story that it ever becomes trite and commonplace in the telling. Its message is far more important and

precious than that. It speaks of a treasure so great that a man will go and sell all that he has to possess it. What is this treasure we have in earthen vessels? It's the knowledge that God was in Christ and certainly there are many in this land who need that treasure that they too may find their peace and all in all in Christ.

INHERENT WORTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL

But I think that Paul might have said also that this treasure concerns the worth of the individual. Paul never told any parables about the ninety and nine and the one lost sheep, or the lost coin, but he certainly had captured the essence of his Lord's teaching about the worth of the individual..... Just think of his letters. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord.. neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." No, all count the same with God, the humblest as well as the highest. Remember those with whom he worked, about whom he wrote. No respect of persons. No one too small or unimportant that Paul could not share a few moments of his time with him. True there is Sergius Paulus, an administrator, and Zenas, a lawyer, but there is also Onesimus, a slave.....

It's a treasure today too. All too often in this land the tribe or clan has been important entity. The individual has not counted for a great deal. Often he's only someone by means of whom you can cement an alliance or pay a debt. But the Christian gospel says, "No, everyone is precious in the sight of God." And that makes us pause. We wonder if our actions belie our words. How easy it is in our work to lose sight of the individual. As we busy ourselves with programs and plans, organization and overall strategy and the like, how much we need to be reminded that we are dealing with individuals, each one of whom is important. They should not just be lost in a pile of statistics, not just numbers in someone's examination book, not just names to be entered upon an index card..... Our faith needs that personal touch. We have this treasure, too, the inherent worth of each individual.

PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

And then I believe that Paul would have said that this treasure of the Christian gospel embraces too the thought of the presence

of the Holy Spirit in the life of each believer... We have this treasure, the assurance that there is an abiding Presence who strengthens and comforts and guides. Paul felt that Presence, or he never could have endured all that about which we read in the eleventh chapter of Second Corinthians — "forty stripes save one, thrice beaten with rods, stoned, weariness, painfulness, hunger, thirst, the care of all the churches." But he had the knowledge that he could make contact with a Power greater than himself. Elton Trueblood wrote, "Millions of men and women have reported an experience of God as the spiritual companion of their souls. In prayer and worship, whether at stated times or in the midst of everyday duties, they have been acutely conscious of Another who has sustained them in life's darkest as well as life's brightest moments." That too is our treasure, as we labor on here in Congo, as we tread new paths that are being hewn for us and lead we know not where, we walk not alone.

THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

And then I'm sure that Paul would have said that this treasure embraces the Christian hope. We are thinking a lot about the Christian hope these days, but we don't have to wait for Evanston to know that there is a Christian hope and what it means for the Christian. Paul put it, according to Phillips translation, "In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own." And Jesus promised, "I go to prepare a place for you...and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Christ gave us the assurance without the details. Yet, what matters the speculation about the how, when and wherefore. It is enough to know that there is this Christian hope. .... What joy, what a treasure it is for us today!

We do have a wonderful treasure: God was in Christ; there is inherent worth in every individual; we walk not alone; our future is full of hope. We'll be talking about a lot of things during the coming days. There will be reports, blueprints and balance sheets. There will be a lot of plans made and motions passed. But let us

never for a moment forget why we are gathered here. Yes, it's for fellowship and inspiration, but primarily it's because we have this treasure and we are seeking ways of sharing it more fully with others.

WE PROCLAIM THIS TREASURE

C. E. Boone

MISSIONARIES go to their fields of service for one purpose. They may do various types of work along with fulfilling that one purpose but they all proclaim this treasure. Reports of the evangelistic work as given at the recent conference held at Vanga revealed that there is no lack of places for such proclamation. People everywhere are anxious to hear the Word and many are following it as they hear it. We might well look at some of the places where they may hear the good news.

Many hear it in their villages as the missionary, along with the pastor, goes from village to village in his field. Again, it may be at the church post where the people from several villages gather for worship and for the Lord's Supper. Perhaps the major feature of the district work in the Vanga field during the past year has been the construction of large permanent church buildings. Major projects are under way at a dozen centers with many of them nearing completion. Several other churches are gathering building materials for their buildings. A great opportunity is given on the mission station itself where there are always large numbers of school children plus the workmen and others who live on or near the station.

KIMPESE —TRAINING SCHOOLS

At Kimpese it is necessary to have the daily chapel service in two sections because the church house is not large enough. Even with this arrangement many must sit outside. Sunday at Kimpese is a great day which starts with inquirers' classes at 7 o'clock in the morning. These classes are taught, for the most part, by students

in the advanced pastors' course. At nine o'clock the adults gather for their worship service. Small children come with their parents for the opening part but leave before the sermon and go to their own story hour where mothers, members of the women's school, teach. Older children have their own service in the form of a Junior Church after the adult service is finished. The staff of our training school here realized that one set type of class or service did not always fill particular needs so they have tried to vary the afternoon and evening meetings. The first Sunday of the month is the time of the Communion service which is held in the afternoon. That evening emphasis and encouragement is given to prayers in the home when either single families or small groups of students gather in small groups for worship and prayer. Another Sunday the whole community meets in the afternoon for a service of a special nature such as a program by a class or a group. These meetings are held on the football field. That evening the entire staff—African and missionary—has prayer meeting together. One other Sunday in the month men, women and children gather in their respective groups to discuss personal spiritual problems in an informal way. On a fifth Sunday the community is privileged to hear an out-standing alumnus of the school speak from his experiences in the work since his graduation from E.P.I.

Close by Kimpese is I.M.E., the home of our new union medical work. At the present time, for the lack of a chapel, services are being held in a wing of the maternity ward which has seating capacity for only one hundred people. To provide an opportunity for all to hear the Gospel five services are held each week day and seven on Sunday including one class for fifteen inquirers.

DIFFICULTIES AND HINDRANCES

Yes, we proclaim this treasure,but in keeping with the philosophy of our African friends which says that we can never be without troubles,we do so in some cases under difficulties. One of these is our lack of African leaders; and we might list two reasons for this. One is that we lack trained men. In the Banza Manteke field it is felt that probably their outstanding need in the whole field is that of trained pastors to lead the churches into a fuller recognition of what it means to follow Christ. Staff and church people are pray

ng that their young men may heed the call and give of their best o the Master.

SHORTAGE OF EVANGELISTS

In all of the Bayaka field there is only one man who could be an evangelist. He has had two years at the Bible School at Kikongo. The Sona Bata church, in annual business session, was encouraged by much which has been done in the past year but delegates to this meeting carried a heavy burden as they tried to find evangelists for their forty nine churches. One by one men go. Two went to be with their Lord during the past year. A younger two year Kimpese graduate gave up his church work because of low pay and discouragements. Another who left gave a reason but it was largely because of a growing lack of interest in God's call to true service.

The lack of missionary personnel makes for heartaches too. This year the evangelistic missionary goes on furlough. The conference must seriously consider the Kikongo Evangelistic work for the coming year. Today the fires have been lighted. The people are responding to leadership. We must not let the opportunity to reap a rich harvest in the Kikongo area slip through our fingers. This is Kikongo's hour.

Many times one is reminded that we are working against the powers of this world. In the Boko field villages every where, even where there are the beginnings of organized Christian work, display dozens of types of fetishes to which are imputed varying degrees of power. Secret societies with their attendant degrading ceremonies are plentiful. Dozens of witch-doctors do a thriving business in the creation and selling of charms and fetishes, plus the propogating of superstition.

LUVUNGA FRANÇOIS

The story of Luvunga François is a good example of this. From the time that he finished his two years of study at the Bible School at Kikongo and returned to Sona Bata to work, Luvunga carried a real burden for the people of his own village. He kept asking the Sona Bata church to send him there and last year after talking with him about the difficulties which he would encounter

there — all of which he already knew too well — they agreed to do it. More than 100 kilometers separate the last village of one church and the first one of the next church. In this area is found a large Catholic mission station. With the exception of Luvunga and his wife and his brother, now a first year student at Kikongo, and his wife almost no one from this area has been won to Christ. At a nearby commercial center clerks and their wives have been church members. All attempts to start work in this area in the past have failed in the face of persecution and lonliness on the part of those sent from other areas. Luvunga is well established and has surmounted courageously the persecution which has come. One native official has threatened him and the whole village with all sorts of things and actually tried to excommunicate the village from his section. Such matters are taken to the state mar and judgments have been fair and Luvunga has the rights he would expect to have. On the way to conference the Metzgers went to visit this new work. They reported a welcome "such as rarely has been our privilege to be accorded." Ten men and thirteen women were baptized in the first such service these folks have ever witnessed. Twenty-nine took communion a an evening service which was followed by the burning of al their fetishes which the pastor had collected and kept for this oc casion. Since nine couples of husband and wife were among those baptized, it was fitting to have a Christian marriage service as a part of the worship. Another thirty five followers remain under instruction.

BAPTISMS

Despite these things we rejoice because we proclaim this treasure with results. By the end of June, 1907 had been baptized at Vanga. At Kimpese sixty three—mostly school children—and a Leopoldville fifty-six followed their Lord in baptism. At Moanza during the first three months of the year the evangelistic mission ary with the local membership committees sat with 1550 of ove 3000 followers on record. Nine hundred ninety-four were accepted and baptized with great joy and interest. One young woman was asked if Mary, the mother of our Lord, could save She replied, "Of course not. Had she been able to save, it would

not have been necessary for her to bear the Saviour of the world." More people in the Kikongo field have been asking for baptism than in the few years just previous. Where there is work started in the Boko field more inquirers are preparing for baptism than in any year since Boko was established.

Along with the baptisms has gone a general turning back to God on the part of those who have been under discipline.

The joys of soul-winning are shared by Africans and missionaries. It is the Congo Christians who are winning the Congolese to Christ in Leopoldville. For those being won it is necessary to have two classes (present enrollment 250) for adult followers and three classes (present enrollment 150) for school children. In a nearby village there is another class with 200 followers in it.

Futila, a small girl of uncertain age but with firm faith and definite conviction, lives in the Moanza field. Last year she asked why she could not be accepted if she knew the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour, knew the Word of God and went to school. It was because of her age. When she returned again this year she was accepted but reluctantly. An hour after, she came to the missionary with her sister, a year or so older than she, with the word that she too now wished to accept Christ and give witness to her faith.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS

But, there is so much yet to be done. Opportunities and needs are all about us. In the great area served by Boko, need knocks with urgency for a great Christian victory over the forces of darkness. According to conservative estimates, this station is responsible for 150,000 Bayaka people. Yet, in all this area the chapels in existence could be counted on the fingers of one's hands.

As we think of other stations too there are many unoccupied areas in which it is still and ever our privilege, our opportunity and our duty to proclaim this treasure or it will not be proclaimed.

THE TREASURE SHARED

HEAVEN'S richest Treasure, earth's greatest Hope is in Christ, God's gift to men. Giving and sharing are especially emphasized at Christmas time. In our worship of adoration and praise at this season, let us view glimpses of what God has wrought as unselfishly we've shared with others the knowledge of our Saviour. Let us realize what a fuller consecration of ourselves and our possessions to Christ might mean to His 'other' children in 1955. Look therefore away from your comfortable, cozy fireside; look yonder beyond your snow-capped horizons, out across the chill and boisterous waves of the sea; travel with us in this land of palm-trees, tropical flora and fauna with its peoples of spiritual hunger and need, and over whom a star-lit Southern Cross brightly shines. See here glimpses of blessing and achievement as God has permitted you with us to share Christ in the school life of Congo folk in Central Africa.

There are over 40,000 children and young people under instruction in our mission schools. Nursery schools and kindergartens care for the wee tots. Primary grades have the highest enrollment, and here large numbers are in their teens before going to school, personal interest and parental consent or encouragement only latently aroused. As the number of Christian homes increases more and more of the younger children are eagerly coming to school. Except for the very youngest who learn of Christ in song, story and prayer, all other pupils are in special classes preparing them for baptism, and following this blessed ordinance, training to prepare for Christian living and service in teaching, preaching, nursing, agriculture, building, home-making.

Leopoldville reports 772 pupils in 17 classes. The manual training class has made new desks for their classrooms. The girls made school uniforms in their sewing classes. On many occasions these boys and girls participate in official parades on holidays and during the visit of important personages to the capital city.

A year ago at Sona Bata 15 girls graduated from the station school and 7 are training for nurses, and 8 to become teachers. The local church contributed 34,000 francs to provide equipment for

carpentry classes for the boys. Banza Manteke is our first Congo station to acquire a Secondary School building and 29 of the 127 pupils already enrolled are from other areas. Garden making and agriculture is an integral part of this curriculum. The girls' school of home economics is well established at this station where 433 girls are under instruction in the boarding schools. On a recent Decision Day, 170 girls went forward.

Baudoin Stadium and Native City

There are over 500 pupils under instruction at Kikongo station. A third year has been added to the course in Home Economics. Mama Marie Nkalambote, a graduate of the Banza Manteke school, is here assisting creditably in the teaching. It is rare indeed that a Congo woman goes into Christian service so far away from her home and own tribe.

Moanza has its station schools for boys and girls, and this year a sixth year of instruction is being given for the first time. Here as at each of the other stations, there are hundreds of little village

schools where faithful and lesser bright lights are trying to lay the foundations in human hearts and minds for a devotion to Christ and love for learning which will lift them from heathen ignorance and darkness, and safeguard them by sheltering them in Christ from the perils of Godlessness which so characterizes places and phases of life today.

Have you been burdened for the work at Boko? In this our newest field of opportunity there are today 13 literate women! In October a special literacy program is to be initiated. Many children are already attending station and 11 village schools. Largest in population, in baptized believers and stewardship of gifts and service is the Vanga church. Under the impetus of Congo Christians permanent buildings in brick and cement are being erected in many areas far distant from the mission station. Most of the primary school work is now carried on in these regional schools. The missionaries and station buildings are now being used to develop work of secondary school standard, classes in typing and simple bookkeeping to fit students for keeping church accounts, statistics, school records; courses in pedagogy to provide the teachers needed in our village schools; the home economics courses for the girls and future home-makers and leaders in work for girls and women. Vanga very generously assists in making available admission to the classes of pupils from Moanza, Boko and Kikongo.

The Bible School at Kikongo, and the schools at Kimpese for training teachers and pastors, and medical workers are preparing young men and women, dedicated to the Lord, and specially called to His service. Graduates are already filling positions of importance in many areas in the Congo. One graduate is attending a Normal School in Belgium. Husbands and wives studying together serving as they learn and nurturing their children in an atmosphere as wholly Christ-centered as possible,—are you not thrilled that you can live, and give and pray for Congo folk and "for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness who hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?" We have this Treasure..to share more faithfully, more abundantly.

DEMONSTRATING THE TREASURE

Dr. Carrie E. Sprague

IN caring for the physical ills of our people, the aim of our medical work is that we may be demonstrating this treasure that we have in Christ our Saviour. We want our medical work to be a means of showing the love of Christ and pointing men to Christ as Saviour. So often we feel inadequate and truly feel like earthen vessels. But in our inadequacy we find that the power of God supplies that which we lack. Statistical reports of numbers of operations performed, babies delivered, patients treated, show only the physical side of the medical work. Only God knows how many souls were pointed to Christ as Saviour, how many blinded eyes were turned from fetish worship to the worship of the true God, how many fears were conquered in the hearts of those who came seeking aid. We will now present a resume of the physical side of the medical work as we present excerpts reported by the various stations at conference.

BANZA MANTEKE

It has been a busy year in the medical department at Banza Manteke, with over 3000 cases having been treated at the station hospital and dispensary. The greatest responsibility for the hospital work has rested in the very capable hands of Lutete Hezekiah, our head *infirmier*. The visits of Dr. Glen Tuttle from Kimpese every 2 to 3 months have been a big help and have made possible 24 major and 186 minor operations. The maternity work continues to increase, Mama Lena Tusamo, our *aide-accoucheuse*, is most capable and is one of the finest Christian characters I have met here in Congo. The leprosy work has increased this year with 209 re ceiving treatment at the lazaret and another smaller group coming in from their villages for injections. Last year we discharged 135 as cured or arrested cases. Our six rural dispensaries have been visited at regular intervals and they are a real aid to the church and evangelistic program.

BOKO

The coming of *Tata* Pululu from Sona Bata to Boko was a real event for he is the only *infirmier-diplomé* in the area. His coming has lifted a tremendous responsibility from us who are unqualified to carry it and our people express a real appreciation of his work and ability. The bi-monthy visits of the Sona Bata doctor have become for our people a focus of hope toward which they look in the interim, but they are looking forward even more to the time when they shall have their own missionary nurse to minister to their needs. We believe that a well established medical work can be one of the powerful forces of evangelism in our field where the lives of our people are still so bound up in their superstitions, fetishes, and village beliefs and practices.

KIKONGO

Since last conference we have been exceptionally busy, but nothing spectacular or miraculous has taken place unless one can say when a very sick, almost hopeless patient recovers, that is truly a miracle. Many patients who have been desperately ill have been treated, and through God's grace and goodness, rather than anything we have done, have been restored to health. Some who become discouraged with the slow effect of the white man's medicine have returned to their villages and to the witch doctor. Witchcraft still has a very strong hold on our people. Again and again we say "we must have qualified African helpers in order to carry on." This certainly is true in our medical work. Kululu Jacque is a very competent *infirmier*. We believe that he has really seen the need and has settled down to do what he can for his people. We feel sure that our Baby clinic work is helping to promote better health among our mothers and babies. The quinine they receive helps control malaria and the soap they receive gives the mothers a desire to bathe their babies. Many babies' lives are saved because at the baby clinics we are able to make an early diagnosis and bring the babies with us to the hospital or send them to a dispensary for treatment. The maternity work has increased greatly this year, 151 babies having been born so far this year. We are looking forward to the day when we will have a real maternity ward and a place of which we can be justly proud.

KIMPESE I. M. E.

We are happy to hear of the continued growth of this medical institution and that it is rapidly approaching maturity. By the end of this year its total missionary staff will number 13, as a nurse, doctor and wife, and a hospital administrator are soon to arrive from the Baptist Missionary Society in England. Lacking a much needed chapel, 5 daily chapel services, and 7 Sunday services are held in a wing of the maternity ward seating 100 in order to meet the spiritual needs of the population averaging over 500. A capable Congolese pastor is urgently needed to shepherd this flock. After a little more than four years we now have 100 permanent buildings of varying sizes with 8 more under construction. Our schools include the nursing school with 69 enrolled, 25 of whom come from the A.B.F.M.S., a school for mid-wives, 10 of whom come from A.B.F.M.S., a Women's school with enrollment of 35, for instruction of the wives of students and workmen in reading, writing, Bible, family life, etc., and a primary school for the 44 children of the station. At the hospital there are more patients than we can conveniently handle, some of them coming from long distances. Over 750 operations have been performed since Nov. 1st, with only one surgical death. Over a 10 month period Dr. Price treated 33 post-polio cases and many fractures and cases of pulmonary and bone tuberculosis. We are looking forward to the establishment of a leprosy colony and tuberculosis service in the future.

LEOPOLDVILLE

The dispensary, under the capable leadership of Mattie Marie, expanded in January into an adjoining room, now set up as an examining room, mainly for pre-natal cases. In February Dr. Freas offered to make bi-monthly visits to our growing work, treating special cases and supervising the activities. Two of our three helpers left for I.M.E. in May, leaving a gap not yet filled in the dispensary staff. Baby Clinic has continued to operate with about 190 in average attendance. Names of new mothers or absentees are given to the Bible women for visitation. White cross supplies have continued to serve both as a drawing card and as a sincere token of Christian love.

MOANZA

Medical work at Moanza has made great advances through the years under the supervision of Miss Agnes Anderson, Dr. Dorothea Witt, Miss Alice Jorgenson, and Miss Dorothy Wiseman. It has grown from the administering of medicines from the back door window to the establishing of a real clinic and hospital. However, during the last 8 months we have had no resident medical missionary at Moanza. Dr. Osterholm and Dr. Walker of Vanga have made 5 medical trips to Moanza and have performed 125 operations. The weekly prenatal and baby clinics have been held. The supply of proteinized milk has continued to be sent to us by the state and has helped many of our undernourished and anemic children and mothers to regain health. A great variety of medical cases have been treated. However there has been a perceptible decline in patients. From reports we are led to believe that there are many in the villages who because of the present conditions (lack of missionary medical staff) remain at home. We wish to pay tribute to the fine African staff of two graduate nurses, one *stageaire*, 8 consecrated student nurses and 2 women who have for months done the bulk of the work and are nobly carrying the responsibility of the work without the needed medical white personnel.

SONA BATA

In spite of the moving of the *infirmiers* school from Sona Bata to Kimpese the medical work at Sona Bata has continued to be heavy. For the year ending October 1953, statistics showed an increase in hospital admissions and in the number of deliveries with a decrease in operations performed. At the present rate we expect to have approximately 800 deliveries during the present year. We still are much handicapped by the lack of a missionary nurse but we are very thankful for the fine Congolese staff of seven graduate male nurses, one graduate *aide-infirmier*, and four graduate *aides-accoucheuses* (mid-wives). In our school for training *aides-infirmiers*, we have 15 men in the second year and 7 in the first year. In the second year class for *aides-accoucheuses* there are 5 girls and 7 in the first year class. Bi-monthly medical visits

to Boko and to five rural dispensaries, and monthy visits to the dispensary in Leo have been made. Two of the rural dispensaries were re-opened after having been closed for some time.

VANGA

Dr. and Mrs. Osterholm left for furlough in July 1953 and the medical work was taken over by Dr. and Mrs. Walker. The medical service of the Vanga Hospital has continued to be active in meeting the needs of the people as seen by the statistical report for the year ending December 31st showing 22,131 outpatients treated, 2,584 hospital patients treated, 1,063 major and minor operations performed and a total of 531 deliveries. Two baby clinics are conducted weekly, one on the station and one across the river at Konzi. New metal roofs have been put on the buildings and several new pieces of equipment have been received. Daily devotional services are held at the dispensary and in the various wards. The fine spirit of the African personnel shown both in caring for the patients and in the evangelistic services has been appreciated very much. There are now three *infirmiers-diplomés* on the Vanga Hospital staff.

A Ferry crossing the Kwilu river near Vanga.

LOAVES AND FISHES

MARGARET JUMP

WE began jotting down "things to remember and do" even before the 1953 conference was ended, in fact just as soon as we decided we would like to invite the mission to Vanga for the 1954 sessions. A glimpse at the notebook would reveal items like—

Check on how many loaves of bread can be made from one five pound sack of flour.

Have extra gasoline on hand.

Remind people to bring silverware and bedding.

Get mats made to cover the windows at the school house.

How many trips can a boy make to the spring in a morning?

Who has a birthday during conference?

Can we arrange trips to the district?

Train dishwashers ahead of time.

What about table cloths and napkins?

Throughout the year as we thought and planned the lists became longer. The time came to plan menus. 80 people × 12 days × 3 meals a day equals 2880 meals. A case of vegetables per meal. Bake twenty-five or thirty loaves of bread a day. Try to have fresh meat twice — beef from Kikwit the first day, sheepburgers later on. Remember the staples — flour, sugar, powdered milk, vinegar, rice, yeast, macaroni. Will we be able to get potatoes? Is there time enough to have cake and ice cream mixes sent from home? If so desserts will be easy.

Water — for cooking, drinking, washing dishes, bathing, laundry. The last is easy — they'll have to take their clothes to the river. The rest — well it takes 24 pails to fill a 55 gallon drum; that's 12 trips to the spring a mile away. Now how many drums will be needed each day?

Housing — nine families at the school; Emily's house a dormitory for women; the guest house, model house, our own homes, the print shop — that takes care of everyone.

Beds — road cots and hospital beds. Kikongo will bring what we lack in their big truck. Blankets — a new bale for the hospital will serve us first. Wash basins, bottles of drinking

water for each room, lanterns, matches, water buckets. Have racks made for hanging up clothes.

Wood — send the big truck out every three days for a load of firewood and have boys to chop it into stove lengths.

Conference room — remove one partition in the administration building, replaster, wire for electricity.

And then it was the 6th of July! We would soon find out how well things had been planned. The first night was hectic as the trucks came in late from Kikwit, and the one with the baggage was delayed because of a broken spring. That meant not enough silverware. And soup is a bit difficult to eat with fingers. However a raid on the cupboard of the Girls' Homemaking School produced enough soup spoons and we shared knives.

Missionaries from Lower Congo traveled to Conference on a DC 3

The cooks were a bit overwhelmed at first, but they soon got used to cooking for eighty rather than for just one family, and took everything in their stride. They were glad for a few hours of free time on Sunday when a large group went to visit various church centers, took their lunch, and the stay-at-homes packed a picnic lunch.

Sunday did have one disadvantage though. We didn't bake that day and Monday night had to serve freshly baked loaves

rather than day-old bread. We used half again as much. The rest of the week we couldn't catch up and so that meant an extra number of loaves every day.

As for leftovers — one can always make soup. Some days the soup would be rich and others rather thin. By the end of conference we had the amounts of food necessary pretty well figured.

Boiling up drinking water enough ahead of time for it to cool, and finding containers in which to keep it was another problem. But again the hospital came to our rescue with a large glass bottle that had contained rubbing alcohol. Our problem was solved until the second day when a note from Polly Walker delivered to me during one of the sessions read: "Margaret, it has happened! The big jug is broken!" It proved to be less serious than we thought and the doctor was able to patch it with adhesive tape. It wasn't until the second week of conference that it broke beyond repair. But in spite of everything there was only one evening that we watched with concern the amount of water our colleagues were drinking.

The twelve days passed quickly. We could hardly believe it when we finished conference a day early. And we couldn't help but be just a bit sorry because as one of our staff members aptly put it: "Oh dear, now I'll have to start planning my own meals again."

IT HAPPENED — I Was There

C. G. Weaver

IT HAPPENED: The annual Conference of American Baptist missionaries in Congo took place this year at our beautiful Vanga station. This station is situated on the banks of the Kwilu river, a tributary of the mighty Congo river. What a time of inspiration and fellowship!

To sum up in a few words one's impressions of this conference is not an easy task. I was kind of awed by it, as my term of service in Congo had been only three months when the meeting

was held, and I was not quite sure what to expect; however if you will follow along with me, maybe you will get some of one person's impressions.

To plan for accomodations for some 80 people is a major task for any mission station to undertake. There are sleeping quarters to provide, meals to prepare and serve (what to order, how much is needed, is it going to be too expensive, will the supplies arrive before the deadline?), water to be on hand at all times (this brought by buckets and barrels), sanitary facilities to provide, and numerous other details. In all of these things, the Vanga staff of Dr. and Mrs. John Walker, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pearson, Miss Emily Keyes, and Rev. and Mrs. Chester Jump and many Congolese helpers had done an excellent job. Preparation had been going on for months.

The Conference began officially with a night session on Tuesday, July 6th, under the able leadership of the Conference Chairman, Mr. Jump, (and in the background our acting Mission Secretary and wife, Rev. and Mrs. Harry Brown). With the very first session, the Conference was off to a good start. The first few days were taken up with various committees meeting to discuss ways and means of forwarding the work of our mission for Christ in this particular part of the Congo. It was the excellent work of these committees which made it possible for the conference to run so smoothly. Someone commented that the smooth running was also aided by the presence of the Society's Budget Secretary and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Dana Albaugh; the New York Area Secretary directly responsible for the Congo field, Rev. Marlin Farnum, and a Board member and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Paul Whiteker of the First Baptist Church of San Diego, Calif. These people added greatly to the success of the conference by their helpful suggestions along the way and the inspiration which they provided. Dr. Whiteker was the inspirational speaker of the evening while the others took turns at opening each day's session with a devotional message. These messages were for the uplift and upbuilding of the spiritual life of the missionaries.

IT HAPPENED: Each station gave a report on the work, known accomplishments and failures, of the past year. The refrain over and over was the need for more personnel. This refrain is in

effect, a challenge to young people to answer the call "come over and help us." Though there is a great need for additional personnel, there was joy because of the presence on the field of 3 new Women's Board missionaries and 5 couples under the General Board. With these new ones, the problem of where to designate missionaries was less difficult than in years past, but there still just are not enough to go around. We neophites had opportunities to express our thinking on the various things discussed, but unless one had passed the first two language exams, he or she could not vote.

For me, one of the high lights was going to an outpost station and witnessing the baptism of over 350 new Christians. *IT HAPPENED* — because missionaries and Congolese had been faithful witnesses to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. At this same church post, there was an afternoon service which was attended by around 1200 people — the church was filled, the doors and windows were filled and there was a large number of people outside.

A humorous sidelight : On the way back to Vanga *IT HAPPENED* — about 14 miles from the Vanga station our Carry-all had a flat tire and, you guessed it, we had no spare; therefore, last in a caravan and though we had asked a driver to stay behind us in case something should happen, he had thought we were ahead of him. We waited about 1½ hours before help came. The Carry-all which came to get us could not get out of low gear when it turned around. Our tire had been fixed and so we headed for home .. oh yes, we had no brakes either!

I have failed to mention the joy which came in meeting those missionaries whom I had not already met, what a staff of devoted, consecrated men and women! One was to recognize this more and more as the Conference progressed.

Our Congolese people were represented by one of their own number from each of our mission stations. These added much to the Conference by their participation in all phases of the program.

As the matter of education is a big part of the missionary task in Congo today, this, by right took up much discussion both in committees and on the Conference floor — how in the midst of certain government requirements can we still present the saving power of Christ to the Congolese boys and girls in our schools

seemed to have been a burden on everyone's heart. These young people are tomorrow's leaders and we must prepare them not only scholastically, but first and foremost, *spiritually*.

In the midst of all the serious discussions, there were times of play — yes, missionaries play and thoroughly enjoy it. What fun we had on Saturday when we had Fun Night with each station participating. Who can forget Johnny Walker coughing up ping-pong balls, or Virginia Pearson singing "Dingbat, the Singing Cat," or Marlin Farnum and Paul Whiteker sounding forth on "Little Bopeep?"

Not only were the adults provided with plenty to keep them busy but the children were also cared for by a Bible School under the capable direction of Mrs. Arley Brown and her assistants. There were 24 missionaries' children at this Conference.

IT HAPPENED: The Acting Mission Secretary had so well prepared the agenda, the Chairman ran the Conference so smoothly, the committees had done their work so efficiently, and no missionary seemed to be too long winded, (as preachers sometimes have the reputation), that we finished the Conference *one whole day ahead of schedule* — this had never happened before.

The last evening of Conference was set aside for a Communion Service and this will long be remembered by all who were present — this service recalling again so vividly to the minds of the missionaries exactly why they were gathered together so far from their homes and families, because Christ gave His all, could we do less than give Him the best we have to offer — our lives?

Yes, all of *THESE THINGS HAPPENED*, because there were men and women at Vanga who had heard and answered the call by saying "Here am I, send me," and were working toward the end that "all might be won to Him."

IMPRESSIONS OF 1954 CONFERENCE

COLON KAPINI

"*I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.*"
Psalms 40 : 10.

A person who is learning sometimes feels that his growth in knowledge is very slow, but his confidence and trust in his teacher help him to learn what he hears and sees. When we hear something, it does not necessarily impress us a great deal. But often when we see something, we are more impressed by it. Hearing and seeing help us to understand rapidly and well.

I was impressed greatly by our missionary conference and can begin to understand why our people and our country are being blessed by God.

The first reason is love — the love of the missionaries which makes them leave their land, their parents, their homes, their work and give themselves to help the Africans; the love of their children here in this hot land, a land of malaria, in the midst of people who are different; the love which keeps them happy and rejoicing; the love of the people in America, too, who continue to think of us in Africa, who send their young men and young women, even their grand-children to us, who send money, so very much money, medicine, clothes and many other things to people whom they have never seen.

The second thing is perseverance. Mr. and Mrs. Missionary, and you missionary children, too, you have been very patient here. You have been bothered, lied to, stolen from — money and things, sometimes you have not been believed when you told us the truth, but you have persevered. (Psalms 40 : 11).

The third impression which I have is happiness. Missionary, you are a happy person in your character, in your work, in your house, in your travels, in your teaching, to those whom you know and to those who are strangers. That is a great help to us.

Finally, I am impressed by your initiative. You have taken a language very different from your own, a language which had

never been written, had never had a written grammar, and you worked to learn it and to write it for us. In all of your work you began with nothing, but you continued. What initiative you have shown!

If these impressions which have grown strong in my heart can be put into the hearts of my brother Christians, those who are learning and those who have learned, to light up our eyes so that we can try to imitate you our leaders, then we will look to our villages, to our unwon brothers of Congo, and to other countries too. And the debt of love will be paid in love, perseverance will be repaid with perseverance, happiness with happiness, initiative with initiative and money with money.

If we can begin to try to do that, then God will pour out blessing upon us from His boundless store.

I HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN —

MABEL ALBAUGH

IN twenty seven years it is possible to do a great deal of forgetting; especially so, when the twenty seven years are spent in a distant country, among a different race of people whose standard of living and whose cultural development are as divergent as are those of the people of the Congo and of the United States. In May and June and July of this year I had the privilege of visiting the American Baptist Mission stations in the Belgian Congo, where thirty years ago I had served a short term as a missionary teacher. During this visit, I found myself remembering many things which I had almost forgotten.

I had almost forgotten how dark green and how thick is the foliage of the mango trees, offering eye-ease and lovely shade from the direct rays of the tropic sun. Almost I had forgotten the artistic delight afforded by the large clusters of golden acacia blooms among their delicate lacy leaves. The prodigality of whole hedges of Crown of Thorns, or of lantana, of hibiscus, or of coleus — this, too, I had almost forgotten. The Christmas poinsettia

purchased at $1.50 a bloom in the United States and carefully tended so as to extend its fragile life as along as possible, had caused me almost to forget that in the Congo, poinsettias bloom profusely on trees as high as the second story of a house.

I had almost forgotten some of the sounds of the Congo. There is the excited passage, each morning, of flocks of red-tailed, grey parrots from an island in the Congo river to their feeding places in the trees of Leopoldville. Each evening their return to their island is a distinctive clamor above the home-going sounds of the city. In the evening, too, from any Congo home-yard comes the rythmic beat of pestle against mortar as the manioc and the greens are prepared for the family meal.

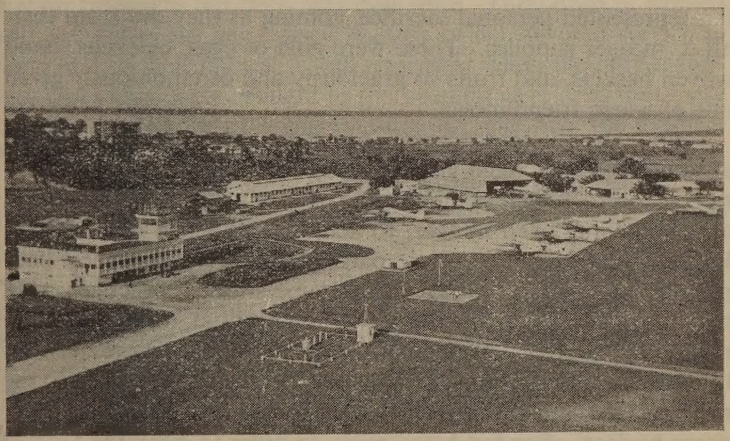
I had almost forgotten once familiar smells in the Congo. There is the smell of *luku* (manioc bread) which is strong in any village. Or on market day, there is the indescribable odor of manioc as it is carried in great baskets on the heads or backs of the women who grew and prepared it, to be sold to school children or to hospital patients, or to city-dwellers. I had all but forgotten the characteristic smell of a Congo classroom; and the sound of slate pencils rasping on slates in the tight grip of laboring fingers.

I had almost forgotten some of the comforts and the discomforts of the Congo seasons — the pressure of humid heat by day and the refreshing coolness which often comes in the night. Almost forgotten, too, were the suddenness and the ferocity of the electric storms which are so frequent in the long rainy season. Partly forgotten, but soon recalled, were the deep sand and the red dust of which most Congo roads and paths are made. Early in the dry season, leaves and bushes along roadsides are thickly coated with red dust as are also the shoes and the lungs of wayfarers.

Almost forgotten were some of the tastes which belong to the Congo — the taste of palm chop; of *saka-saka* (manioc greens); of African fruits — mango, *nsafu*, *cœur de bœuf;* of sweet manioc chips; of *nguadi* (African partridge); and of native grown coffee and peanuts.

I had almost forgotten how eagerly one watches for mail from home, especially when one lives on an inland station to which

mail must be brought by river boat moving slowly against the strong currents of African rivers; or runner who has travelled by foot for several days to carry in these only ties with the loved-ones far away. By these same means, too, come news of current world happenings. I had almost forgotten how far removed from the rest of the world one soon becomes in the Congo; that is unless one has a radio strong enough to catch brief world news broadcasts, and time to listen to them.



Airport at Leopoldville

I had almost forgotten about Congo babies — about their brown plumpness, their fuzzy heads, their engaging ways. I soon remembered how universally they are in need of Kleenex-care; and how they cry when their bare skin is lowered into the metal bowl of the scales at baby clinic time.

I had almost forgotten many things about Congo women — how burdened they are with work, with ignorance, with child bearing. And yet, how merry they often are, and how courteous and friendly. I marvelled again and again at their upright graceful carriage, due in part to the fantastic loads which they carry

on their heads and hips and backs. I was quite fascinated by the unusual designs on the cloth of their garments. Among the often used designs were: large peacocks, fish, palm trees, coiled snakes, Winston Churchill, the Pope, the inscription "Prize Winner of 1953." I was touched by their yearning for a friendly greeting and for an interest in their lives.

I had almost forgotten how warmly, friendly and welcoming are our African friends, and how eager to communicate their appreciation for affectionate interest on our part. This they frequently did in very concrete form, by bringing us gifts which often represented personal sacrifice, coming as they did from their all to meager supplies. These were gifts of eggs, chickens, hand woven baskets, and fruits so graciously and ceremoniously given out of warm friendliness.

Only partly remembered, too, was the poignancy of the eagerness of the Congo girls and boys for education in our mission schools; of their willingness to endure necessary restrictions, and sometimes even hunger, to achieve this much desired tool. Partially forgotten were the desparate physical needs of these people who are learning to leave their superstitious practices, and to come in large numbers to the mission hospital, to the Christian nurse and doctor. There was also the memory revived of thousands and thousands of childlike people, crowding into the mission churches and in great overflow groups outside, having come by foot, often for many miles, in order to hear the Gospel preached.

Anyone who has known missionary service even for a few years, understands well the strength of the bond which unites missionary and nationals. To me, these Africans were "my people," and my interest in, and concern for them has been a vital part of the twenty seven years since I left the Congo, yet I have recently found that I had almost forgotten how strong is the tie which binds our hearts to those of our African Christian fellowship. It is, indeed, a bond stronger than that of friendship, or even of family; it is the bond which makes as one all of God's children.

I had almost forgotten many things — but not quite. And now I shall always vividly remember.

Esther Ehnbom

NONE of us was prepared to receive that telegram announcing Esther Ehnbom's death on July 15. We had no word of her illness and a recent letter said she was looking forward to her return and hoped to sail in October.

For Esther it was a day of glad fulfillment, and we are glad she did not have to suffer long, but for the rest of us, missionaries and Congolese, her going was a great loss.

Esther Ehnbom came to the Congo in 1927 and except for regular furloughs has been here ever since. Thousands of women will rise up to call her blessed because of her devoted service to them and to their babies. I well remember when the only maternity cases that were brought to the hospital were ones that there was not much hope of doing anything for, and how the mothers fled when she wanted to wrap their sick babies in a warm blanket.

Kindness and patience and love slowly broke down the barriers and the women came to the baby clinics and others came for delivery. The Government recognized the good work being done and in memory of Queen Astrid gave money for the building of a good maternity hospital and Esther supervised the building of it. Before long that building was too small and another building had to be put up for the mothers in waiting, who come from afar. Those who came not only found help for their bodies and their babies but for their souls as well. Esther never lost an occasion to witness for her Lord.

The other thing that had a big place in her heart was the work with the lepers. One was always surprised at the happy positive faith of those afflicted folk. That was largely due to Esther's own cheerful, encouraging attitude among them. How happy she was in these last few years when because of the new treatment, many were able to return to their villages as cured. At the leper camp on the walls of a row of brick houses that she had built, the mason lepers who did the building, put her name in dark bricks, so that whoever passes sees ENBOMI written there in memory of her loving service to them. Her name is not only written in brick and mortar but in the lives of many people who will always remember her with thanksgiving.

— MARY BONAR

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